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LANDLORDS TRY TO CIRCUMVENT LAND REFORM

LANDLORDS RENOUNCE PRIVILEGES -- Hong Kong Shih-pao, 12 Sep 50

The Nan-fang Jih-pao today prints the following story:

Landlords in Ling-ch'uan Hsien of Kwangsi have reduced rents and are selling or giving away land to counter the coming Communist land reform. In some cases the land is turned over to the peasants' union or the head of the local militia. Communists claim that this "illegal" transfer contravenes the land-reform law, and their agents are warned against it.

SELL, GIVE AWAY POSSESSIONS -- Shanghai Hsin-wen Jih-pao, 23 Aug 50

After the new land law was promulgated, a number of landlords in south Kiangsu tried in the following ways to circumvent its provisions:

1. Sale of Cattle

In Li-shui Hsien, Landlord Huang-chung had 100 mou, 30 of which he cultivated himself. He had three work cattle, and hired a long-term farmhand. When the land-reform law was published, he gave one cow to his daughter, and sold one to a dealer in Tan-yang. A landlord in the same district, T'ang Yu-pe, had more than 100 mou. In July he sold a cow. When a cell-head in the peasants' union remonstrated, he said "I'm selling it; what can you do about it?"

2. Disposing of Buildings, Tools, Furniture

In Wu-hsi Hsien, Landlord Wang Wei-liang had more than 80 mou. When the law was published, he tore down or sold his buildings, giving the excuse of economic difficulties. In the Fou-ch'iao district of T'ai-ch'iang, Landlord P'u Ching-min was renting out 200 mou while cultivating more than 30 himself. He gave away or sold more than 40 pieces of furniture. Nearby, Landlord Li Keng-yao sold six water-drawing machines. In the vicinity of Wu-hsi, Landlord Sheng Chien-hsiao loaded tools, furniture, etc., on a large boat and took them to Tang-k'ou, where he sold them.

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3. Selling Land, Ownership Deeds

Near T'ai-ch'ang, Landlord Huang Hui-min rented out more than 400 mou, while he himself cultivated more than 40. When the land-reform law was issued, he sold 32 mou, at a price of 30-40 catties of cottonseed. At a place near Wu-hsi, four peasant homes received land deeds, nicely wrapped in red paper. Other landlords in the vicinity sold land deeds, only asking two packs of Red Gold cigarettes, or 20 pints of rice for each deed.

4. Forging Mortgage Papers, Dividing Family Property

Near Wu-hsi, Landlord Meng Yang-su owned 90 mou. Knowing he would have to get rid of it when land reform was effected, he commissioned someone to sell 2.1 mou to Shen Mei-ken, manager of a hosiery mill. Fearing investigation by the local peasants' union, he forged a mortgage deed, merely claiming that he had owed Shen 15 piculs of rice, for which this patch of field was mortgaged to him. In Mu-tu district near Suchow, Landlord Ting Chin-han when registering his more than 120 mou, divided it into nine parcels, conveying one portion even to his very young granddaughter. Near Li-shui, Landlords T'ang Yu-pe last month made a fraudulent division into four sections, hoping thus to escape land reform.

5. Letting Land Go Waste

Near Wu-chin, Landlord Wu Hsueh-ken, who rented out more than 240 mou and hired laborers to farm more than 40 mou, used only 200 catties of bean cake as fertilizer [which was barely enough] to satisfy the peasants' union scrutiny and exhortation for production. Near Li-shui, Landlord T'ang Cheng-yin had 400 mou, 90 of which he cultivated himself; the rest was treated on the plan of "get what it yields", while 20 mou were allowed to go to waste.

Other varieties of sabotage were tried, such as concealing or selling of grain; starting reports and threatening bribing cadres, taking advantage of local or other group interest among the masses, fomenting factional strife, trying to isolate peasants and union cadres who come from elsewhere.

In such ways, the landlord class is injuring the people's wealth, and illegally nullifying land reform. When the people find it out, they report it to the local authorities. The landlords are then brought to book and punished. The South Kiangsu Administrative Office has issued stringent orders against all such sabotage of the land-reform plans. Therefore all recalcitrant landlords should cease such destructive behavior, confess their fault to the local peasants and the people's government, and submit to the government's rulings, repenting and beginning life anew. Any who remain ignorant and obstinate will be pointed out by the masses and receive the law's penalties.

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